

**Department of Transportation
Professional Services Management Unit
Request for Letters of Interest
DBE/MBE/WBE Certification Assistance**

A. PROJECT REQUEST

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (“Department”) desires to engage a private consulting firm (“Firm”) to assist in reviewing applications to determine eligibility of applicant to become a certified disadvantaged business in accordance with Federal criteria. Such determination will require travel in the state of North Carolina to perform site visits to the applicant’s place of employment and job sites as required.

B. BACKGROUND

In accordance with USDOT regulations 49 CFR Part 26, and North Carolina General Statute 136-28.4, the Department shall have a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program as well as a Minority Enterprise Program (MBE) and a Woman Enterprise Program (WBE).

C. REQUIREMENTS

Per G.S. 136-28.4, to the extent reasonably practicable, the determination of MBE and WBE status shall mirror the process required by the Federal U.S. Department of Transportation for the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program set in 49 CFR Part 26. The MBE and WBE determination is based on the federal DBE application and will not require a separate application.

Determination of socially and economically disadvantaged firms is based on federal criteria submitted to the Unified Certification Program (UCP) under the NCDOT Equal Opportunity and Workforce Services Unit (EOWS).

D. PREQUALIFICATION

Prequalification of the firm is not necessary prior to submittal. The firm’s qualifications will be determined based on the information provided in the Letter of Interest.

E. SMALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM (SPSF) PARTICIPATION

The Department encourages the use of Small Professional Services Firms (SPSF). Small businesses determined to be eligible for participation in the SPSF program are those meeting size standards defined by Small Business Administration (SBA) regulations, 13

CFR Part 121 in Sector 54 under the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS). The SPSF program is a race, ethnicity, and gender neutral program designed to increase the availability of contracting opportunities for small businesses on federal, state and locally funded contracts. SPSF participation is not contingent upon the funding source. Firms that are SPSF certified can be found on the Directory of Transportation Firms.

The Firm, at the time of the Letter of Interest is submitted, shall submit a listing of all known SPSF firms that will participate in the performance of the identified work. *Upon completion of the project, justification for not using the firms as intended must be submitted to NCDOT.*

Even though specific DBE/MBE/WBE goals are not required for this project, the Department of Transportation is committed to providing opportunity for small and disadvantaged businesses to perform on its contracts through established Department goals. The Firm, subconsultant and subfirm shall not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, age, disability or sex in the performance of this contract.

F. DIRECTORY OF TRANSPORTATION FIRMS

Federal law requires that the Department create and maintain a database of all firms that are participating or attempting to participate in NCDOT-assisted contracts. To meet this requirement, The Department has a Directory of Transportation Firms that lists those firms that meet NCDOT qualifications as well as those firms that are DBE/MBE/WBE/SBE/SPSF certified through North Carolina's Unified Certification Program. The Directory can be accessed by a link on the Department's homepage or by entering <https://partner.ncdot.gov/VendorDirectory/default.html> in the address bar of your web browser.

Note: The listing of an individual firm in the Department's Directory shall not be construed as an endorsement of the firm.

G. EVALUATION

All firms who submit responsive Letters of Interest will be considered.

The evaluation of firms submitting Letters of Interest for this work will be based on the following considerations and their respective weights:

1. The Firm's knowledge of the federal regulations required for certification, including any designated subconsultants; 30%
2. The Firm's experience with the North Carolina Department of Transportation or any other state Department Of Transportations's, municipalities, airports, or

- public transportation systems as it relates to certifying firms in accordance with the federal regulations.
- 40%
3. The Firm's knowledge and experience relating to transportation construction activities
- 10%
4. Availability of staff that will be dedicated to this project.
- 20%

The selection of a private consulting firm to provide services on these specific projects will be handled in accordance with the following process:

1. Submission by the private consulting firm of a Letter of Interest (LOI).
2. Department will short list private consulting firms to a minimum of three firms.
3. Pre-interview meeting and oral interview at the option of the Department.
4. Department will select a private consulting firm to provide the services.

After reviewing qualifications, if firms are equal on the evaluation review, then those qualified firms with proposed SPSF participation will be given priority consideration.

H. METHOD OF PAYMENT

The method of payment for this service will be **Cost Plus not to exceed \$100,000.00**. Payments will be made on a monthly basis for work completed during the month upon submission of an invoice, approval by the Department, and accompanied by proper supporting documentation.

I. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The selected firm will provide all labor, equipment and materials necessary to perform the required work. All work is to be performed according to current Federal and State regulations.

Final documents for the work listed above shall be prepared in electronic format where feasible and provided to NCDOT. The final document shall remain the property of the NCDOT.

This contract is for one (1) year from the date of execution or after the not-to-exceed amount have been depleted, unless mutually agreed to by both parties.

FORMAT FOR SUBMISSION OF A
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES MANAGEMENT UNIT
LETTER OF INTEREST

All Letters of Interest are limited to fifteen (15) pages inclusive of cover sheet, and shall be typed 8 ½" x 11" sheets, single spaced, one sided. **ONLY ELECTRONIC LETTERS OF INTEREST WILL BE ACCEPTED.** Letters of Interest containing more than fifteen (15) pages will not be considered.

Letters of Interest should be submitted in .pdf format using software such as Adobe, CutePDF PDF Writer, DocuDesk deskPDF, etc.

One copy of the Letter of Interest should be sent through NCDOT's FTS system as a .pdf file: psmu-411@ncdot.gov. The FTS system will send you an electronic receipt when your LOI is downloaded to PSMU's server. Paper copies are not required. The subject line should contain "LOI for DBE Certification Assistance".

If an interested firm does not have an FTS account they should send a request through e-mail to psmu-411@ncdot.gov. A response will be sent via the FTS system that will provide a login username, password and login procedures.

SECTION I – COVER / INTRODUCTORY LETTER

The introductory letter should be addressed to Manager of the Professional Services Management Unit. Said letter is limited to two (2) pages and should contain the following elements of information:

- Expression of firm's interest in the work;
- Statement regarding firm's possible conflict of interest for this project; and
- Summation of information contained in the Letter of Interest **including an email address and telephone number for the firm's contact person.**

SECTION II – EVALUATION FACTORS

This section is limited to 7 pages and should contain information regarding evaluation and other factors listed in the advertisement such as:

- Identify project personnel/subconsultants qualifications and experience as it relates to this project;
- Unique qualifications of key team members;
- Identify type and location of similar work performed within last five (5) years;

- Understanding of project approach;
- Availability of firm to meet with Department staff;

Note: If a project team or subconsultant encounters personnel changes, or any other changes of significance dealing with the company, NCDOT should be notified immediately.

SECTION III– SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION

This section is limited to 6 pages should contain the following information:

- Organizational chart indicating personnel to be assigned by discipline;
- Resumes of key personnel;
- Names, classification, and location of the firm's employees to be assigned to the advertised project; and
- Other relevant information.

SUBMITTAL INFORMATION

Firms are invited to have Letters of Interest for furnishing the above services FTS-ed to the Professional Services Management Unit by **12:00 p.m.** on January 6, 2015. **Letters of Interest received after this deadline will not be considered.**

Firms submitting Letters of Interest are encouraged to carefully check them for conformance to the requirements stated above. If Letters of Interest do not meet ALL of these requirements they will be disqualified. No exceptions will be granted.

Any questions concerning the advertisement or scope of this work should be directed to Arthur Petteway at apetteway@ncdot.gov or by telephone at (919) 707-7135.

If you feel that the information provided is inadequate to submit a Letter of Interest, please contact Mr. Petteway.

Private consulting firms on the short list will be notified of such on January 20, 2015. Notification will not be sent to firms not short listed. In the event the Department elects to hold Oral Interviews, interviews will be held the week of February 2, 2015.

The firm selected will be notified by **February 6, 2015**. Notification will not be sent to firms not selected.

Advertised: December 15, 2014

The firm(s) selected will be listed on the Internet at

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/letting/Pages/Private-Engineering-Firm-Advertisements-.aspx>

by

February 9, 2015.

The Department reserves the right to reject any and all Letters of Interest.